

Case 3365***Atractus* Wagler, 1828 and *Atractus trilineatus* Wagler, 1828
(Reptilia, Serpentes): proposed conservation**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application, under Article 23.9.3 of the Code, is to conserve the generic name *Atractus* Wagler, 1828 for a group of common Neotropical snakes by suppression of its senior objective synonym *Brachyura* Kuhl and van Hasselt, 1822. In addition, it is proposed that the specific name *Atractus trilineatus* Wagler, 1828 (the name of the type species of *Atractus*) is conserved by suppression of its senior objective synonym *Brachyorrhos kuhli* H. Boie in Schlegel, 1826.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Serpentes; *Atractus*; *Brachyura*; *Atractus trilineatus*; *Brachyorrhos kuhli*; Neotropical snakes.

1. The generic name *Atractus* Wagler, 1828 (col. 741) (type species *Atractus trilineatus* Wagler, 1828 (col. 742) by monotypy) has been in continuous use since Boulenger (1894, p. 300) for a tropical American snake genus containing ca. 80 valid species. Hoogmoed (1982) discovered that the generic name *Atractus* and that of its type species, *A. trilineatus*, are junior objective synonyms of *Brachyura* Kuhl & Hasselt, 1822a (p. 101) and its type species by monotypy, *Coluber brachyura* Kuhl, 1820 (p. 89), respectively. Although Hoogmoed (1982, p. 135) indicated that the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature should be asked to give precedence to *Atractus* and *A. trilineatus* no application has previously been submitted.

2. Kuhl (1820, p. 89) described *Coluber brachyurus* based on a snake (RMNH 48) from 'Java' in the Nationaal Natuurhistorisch Museum, Leiden (formerly Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, RMNH). This name is preoccupied by *Coluber brachiurus* Shaw, 1802 (p. 470) for an entirely different species. Kuhl & van Hasselt, 1822a (p. 101) proposed *Brachyura* as a new genus and included as its only named species *Coluber brachyura* Kuhl, 1820 which suffices to make the generic name available and *C. brachyura* its type species by monotypy.

3. During the period 1823 to 1825 Heinrich Boie prepared a large, never to be published, manuscript (with ca. 40 plates) on the 'Erpétologie de Java' (Hoogmoed, 1980, 1982). This opus was based on specimens, notes, illustrations and descriptions sent to Leiden by C. Reinwardt, H. Kuhl and J.C. van Hasselt as members of the Dutch 'Natuurkundige Commissie' (= Natural History Commission of the Dutch

East Indies). Several subsequent herpetologists published many of the names and descriptions contained in the *Erpétologie de Java* and attributed them to H. Boie or the previously mentioned members of the 'Natuurkundige Commissie'.

4. Friedrich Boie (1826, col. 981) made the generic name *Brachyorrhos* available by indication in listing *Coluber albus* Linnaeus, 1758 as its only included named species, although he indicated there were more by using the letters 'u.v.a.' (und viele andere = and many more). He credited the generic name to Kuhl based on the *Erpétologie de Java*. Hoogmoed (1982, p. 132) and Williams & Wallach (1989, p. 21) incorrectly cited this generic name as H. Boie in Schlegel, 1826 but Schlegel's papers (1826a, 1826b) appeared after that of F. Boie. Schlegel (1826a, p. 236, 1826b, col. 291) listed *Brachyorrhos* as containing several species including 'Kuhli B. (brachyurus Kuhl.) N. esp.' Consequently *Brachyorrhos kuhli* H. Boie in Schlegel, 1826 must stand as a new replacement name (nomen novum) for the preoccupied name *Coluber brachyurus* Kuhl, 1820.

5. Wagler (1828, p. 742, pl. X) described the genus *Atractus* and its single species *A. trilineatus*. As pointed out by Hoogmoed (1982, p. 134), the names *Coluber brachyura* Kuhl, 1820 and its replacement *Brachyorrhos kuhli* H. Boie in Schlegel, 1826 are based on the same species as the holotype of *Atractus trilineatus* Wagler, 1828. The specimen on which these first two names are based (RMNH 48) also served as one of the types of *Rabdosoma lineatum* Duméril, Bibron & Duméril, 1854, long recognized as a synonym of *A. trilineatus*, and it was selected as lectotype for *R. lineatum* by Hoogmoed (1982, p. 135). At the end of the description of *A. trilineatus* Wagler (1828) says that 'the Trois-rayes of Bonnaterre . . . and Lacépède . . . seem to be alike'. Their species, however, according to the text and the picture, has a distinct, blunt head and 34 pairs of subcaudals. We checked the descriptions of the Trois-raies in Bonnaterre (1790, p. 42 *C. [oluber] Ter-lineatus*, pl. 41, fig. 3) and Lacépède (1789, p. 254 La Trois-raies, pl. XIII, fig. 1; 1790, p. 30 La Trois-raies, pl. II, fig. 1; 1799, p. 166 La Trois-raies, pl. XIII, fig. 1). The descriptions by both authors are slightly different, but are essentially the same, as Bonnaterre (1790) bases his completely on Lacépède (1789). Apart from the shape of the head (which is drawn distinctly wider than the body) and the much higher number of subcaudals (34 versus 15 in *A. trilineatus*), the size mentioned for the Trois-raies also seems well over the maximum size for *A. trilineatus* (un pied cinq pouces six lignes = one foot five inches and six lines). Thus, we conclude that the Trois-raies of Lacépède (1789) and Bonnaterre (1790) represents a different (unknown) species and is not synonymous with Wagler's *Atractus trilineatus*.

6. The generic name *Brachyura* Kuhl & van Hasselt, 1822a has not been used except by Kuhl & van Hasselt (1822b, p. 473) and Kuhl (1824, p. 81) as a valid name since its proposal. The name *Brachyorrhos kuhli* H. Boie in Schlegel, 1826 was used only a few times during the 19th century by Schlegel (1826a, p. 233; 1826b, col. 291), F. Boie (1827, col. 540), Wagler (1830, p. 190) and Schlegel (1837, p. 34). *Atractus* on the other hand has been used repeatedly and continuously for the genus of snakes in question following Boulenger (1894). This usage is summarized in Savage (1960) and Hoogmoed (1980) by citation of 75 publications. All subsequent treatments of the genus continue to use the name *Atractus*. Similarly, *Atractus trilineatus* Wagler, 1828 has been used universally during the same time period for the species from Trinidad, northern Venezuela, western Guyana and northern Brazil, which is the same taxon as

Brachyorrhos kuhli. The name *Atractus* Wagler, 1828 may qualify as nomen protectum, as it has been in continuous use, while the name *Brachyura* Kuhl & van Hasselt, 1822 has not been used since 1899. However, *Atractus trilineatus* Wagler, 1828 does not seem to have been used in 25 publications by ten different authors and therefore does not qualify for the automatic reversal of precedence under Article 23.9.1.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to suppress the following names for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy:
 - (a) *Brachyura* Kuhl & van Hasselt, 1822;
 - (b) *kuhli* H. Boie in Schlegel, 1826, as published in the binomen *Brachyorrhos kuhli* (senior objective synonym of *Atractus trilineatus*);
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Atractus* Wagler, 1828 (gender: masculine), type species by monotypy *A. trilineatus* Wagler, 1828;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *trilineatus*, as published in the binomen *Atractus trilineatus* Wagler, 1828;
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the name *Brachyura* Kuhl & van Hasselt, 1822, as suppressed in (1)(a) above;
- (5) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *kuhli* H. Boie in Schlegel, 1826, as published in the binomen *Brachyorrhos kuhli* (senior objective synonym of *Atractus trilineatus*) and as suppressed in (1)(b) above.

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Comments on this case are invited for publication (subject to editing) in the *Bulletin*; they should be sent to the Executive Secretary, I.C.Z.N., Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K. (e-mail: iczn@nhm.ac.uk).